

Amendment of the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended). In a process for the preparation of a catalyst for the production of ethylene oxide comprised of silver supported on an alumina carrier, the improvement which comprises subjecting the carrier to aqua-thermal treatment prior to deposition of silver, such aqua-thermal treatment comprising a sequential series of at least two carrier washings with intermediate carrier calcination at a temperature above 200°C.

Claim 2 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal treatment comprises a sequential series of at least two carrier washings with intermediate carrier calcination at a temperature in the range 300°C to 1000°C.

Claim 3 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal carrier treatment comprises a sequence of carrier wash and carrier calcination cycles, such that the carrier is first subjected to a wash cycle which includes sequential washes wash-cycles numbering from one to five, and then the carrier is calcined at a specified temperature above 200°C before being again subjected to a further wash cycle which includes from one to five individual carrier washes.

Claim 4 (original). The process of claim 3 wherein the ~~wash-calcine-wash~~ sequence is repeated until the carrier is subjected to a total of from two to five

wash cycles, each wash cycle including from one to five individual carrier washes, and from one to four calcination cycles positioned between successive wash cycles.

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (currently amended). The process of claim [[5]] 1 wherein the said carrier calcination is at least 0.5 hours in duration.

Claim 7 (original). The process of claim 6 wherein the said carrier calcination is performed in air or other gaseous environment including oxygen.

Claim 8 (original). The process of claim 6 wherein the said carrier calcination is performed in a gaseous environment that is essentially free of oxygen.

Claim 9 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the carrier is heated to 50-1000°C after the aqua-thermal carrier treatment.

Claim 10 (original). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal treatment comprises carrier washing in water that is essentially free from impurities.

Claim 11 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal carrier treatment comprises carrier washing in aqueous solutions of ammonium fluoride, such that the molar concentration of ammonium fluoride is between 0.0001 and 5.0.

Claim 12 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal carrier treatment comprises carrier washing in aqueous solutions of mineral acids including hydrohalic; [[or]] hydrooxyhalic acids; [[or]] the oxyacids

of nitrogen ~~phosphorus~~ phosphorus and sulfur[[,]]; [[or]] carboxylic acids,[[,]] sulfonic acids; [[,]] or phosphonic acids, ~~or the like~~, such that the molar concentration of hydronium ~~ions~~ ions is between 0.0001 and 5.0.

Claim 13 (currently amended). The process of claim 1 wherein the said aqua-thermal carrier treatment comprises carrier washing in aqueous solutions of salts of alkali metal ions (Group IA), alkaline earth metal ions (Group IIA) or ammonium ion, ~~or the like~~, with acetate, carbonate, hydroxide, halide, nitrate, oxalate, phosphate, sulfate or the like, such that the molar concentration of the salt is between 0.0001 and 5.0.

Claim 14 (original). The ethylene oxide catalyst carrier prepared the process of claim 1.

Claim 15 (original). An ethylene oxide catalyst comprising silver supported on the carrier claim 1.